



Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Executive Office of Housing and
Economic Development

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Baker-Polito Administration Announces MassWorks Infrastructure Award in Northampton

Grant will support energy efficient mixed-income housing



NORTHAMPTON – Dec. 17, 2019 – Today, Housing and Economic Development Secretary Mike Kennealy joined Mayor David Narkewicz, Senator Jo Comerford, Representative Lindsay Sabadosa, and other local leaders to announce a MassWorks Infrastructure Program grant of \$950,000 to support the North Commons housing development. The project will help fund utilities, roadway and walking trails connecting North Commons to adjacent development.

North Commons is a 53-unit, mixed income passive housing project. Passive housing reduces the development's environmental footprint with ultra-low energy heating and cooling. The MassWorks infrastructure investments will complete more than two decades of infrastructure buildout in Village Hill, the 126-acre public/private redevelopment of a former mental health hospital decommissioned in the 1990s as part of the Commonwealth's Surplus Property Program. This final step will connect the North Commons Village Hill projects.

"MassWorks is a valuable program that maximizes return on investment for capital funding, delivering vital infrastructure repairs that improve public safety while stimulating local and private development, job growth and housing production," **said Governor Charlie Baker**. "We will continue to collaborate closely with local leaders to identify opportunities and target public resources toward the growth and wellbeing of communities across the Commonwealth."

"As former municipal leaders, Governor Baker and I know firsthand the value of flexible grant programs like MassWorks, which help communities make targeted enhancements and provide opportunities for economic development," **said Lt. Governor Karyn Polito**. "Today's award represents the culmination of decades of planning and cooperation between Northampton and the state, and supports much-needed housing for this community."

"This administration recognizes the importance of reliable, modern infrastructure to the safety and success of communities of all sizes," **said Housing and Economic Development Secretary Mike Kennealy**. "Massachusetts is in a housing crisis, and we are proud to invest in the infrastructure upgrades necessary to complete the Village Hill site. Thanks to the collaboration between the City of Northampton, MassDevelopment, The Community Builders, and our administration, an additional 53

units of new mixed-income housing will be produced.”

Over the past 20 years, the Village Hill site has transformed into a community of affordable and market rate housing, ranging from a homeless shelter and affordable apartments to single-family and condominium homes. The Community Builders (TCB), one of the nation's largest non-profit housing developers, has been selected by MassDevelopment to build out the final lot located adjacent to Village Hill. The North Commons project was [recently awarded](#) \$212,000 through the Massachusetts Clean Energy Center’s Passive House Design Challenge program, part of the Baker-Polito Administration’s [\\$15 million Affordable Access for Clean and Efficient Energy \(AACEE\) initiative](#). Northampton will also commit \$150,000 in Community Development Block Grants to the housing project.

The Department of Housing and Community Development has also supported the build out of four sections of Village Hill, the most recent of which was 35 Village Hill Road, funded in the Community Scale Housing Initiative round in 2018, and included 12 units with six of them affordable.

"This funding will allow us to support the creation of desperately needed mixed-income housing, provide homes for the workers that drive Northampton's economy, and complete the public infrastructure at Village Hill. It is the capstone on many years of city and state support for Village Hill, the former Northampton State Hospital. This project will leverage \$24 million in private investment, through The Community Builders, Inc.," **said Mayor David J. Narkewicz**.

“I could not be more excited that EOHED is supporting this housing development project in Northampton,” **said Senator Jo Comerford**. “This type of smart collaboration is a critical step towards the city meeting its housing development goals, as well as towards creating the environmentally sustainable and affordable housing stock in the Commonwealth that we know we need.”

"All too often, the housing crisis is seen as an Eastern Massachusetts issue, but cities like Northampton have a pressing need for more affordable housing for both low and middle income individuals and families. Available housing fills up immediately, and wait lists remain long. That's why projects like this mixed-income property at Village Hill are

essential to keeping Northampton a vibrant, thriving community with housing for all," **said Representative Lindsay Sabadosa.**

"Since 2002, MassDevelopment has been proud to oversee the development of Village Hill Northampton from a former state hospital site into a master-planned community with housing, commercial uses, and open space," **said MassDevelopment President & CEO Lauren Liss.** "We're grateful to the Baker-Polito Administration for today's MassWorks award that will advance this community with key infrastructure improvements.

"We are thrilled that the city received this Mass works grant which will support the completion of roadways, trail ways and accessible sidewalks at the Village Hill Community," **said Rachana Crowley, regional development manager at The Community Builders.** "Together with TCB's North Commons project, which will be 53 units of mixed-income rental housing designed to the most aggressive energy efficiency standards, the Passive House, these projects represent the culmination of two decades of planning and redevelopment in Northampton. TCB is grateful to have an ongoing role along with other public-private partners to further smart affordable housing investments across the Commonwealth. Without our funders and partners at EOHED, the city of Northampton, Valley CDC and DHCD, this work would not be possible."

Through the 2019 MassWorks round, the Baker-Polito Administration will award more than \$72 million in MassWorks awards to a diverse mix of 36 projects in 35 communities across the Commonwealth, including nine Gateway Cities and eight communities that will receive MassWorks funding for the first time. The awards will unlock a total of \$2.3 billion in private investment and more than 4,600 new full-time jobs, along with more than 3,100 new housing units, more than a third of which are affordable, building on the Administration's efforts to tackle the ongoing housing shortage through complementary programs like [historic funding for affordable housing](#) and the proposed [Housing Choice legislation](#). The transformative projects funded by the 2019 awards were selected from 92 applications, totaling \$223 million in requests.

Since 2015, the Baker-Polito Administration has awarded more than \$456 million in MassWorks grants to support 219 shovel-ready projects in 141 communities.

MassWorks funding has leveraged over \$9.2B in private investments and made possible the creation of more than 14,000 new housing units and tens of thousands of construction and permanent jobs.

Governor Baker signed economic development legislation in August 2018 that included substantial new funding for municipalities, including another \$250 million for MassWorks awards. The legislation built on the Baker-Polito Administration's work to partner with communities to catalyze economic development and create new opportunities for residents across the Commonwealth, including the [2016 Job Creation and Workforce Development act](#), which authorized \$1 billion to support economic development efforts across the state, including a \$500 million authorization for the MassWorks Infrastructure Program, enhanced tools and the introduction of new strategies for job-readiness efforts.

Learn more about MassWorks [here](#).

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